

LOCAL

U.S. Department of Labor: Louisville McDonald's franchise violated child labor laws

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Published 5:50 p.m. ET Feb. 5, 2020 | Updated 11:45 a.m. ET Feb. 9, 2020

Six Louisville McDonald's stores were fined almost \$50,000 for violating child labor laws, the U.S. Department of Labor announced Wednesday.

According to a news release, NPT Partners I LLC employed 14 and 15-year-olds "to work outside of legally approved hours, and for more hours than allowed by law."

Sixty-six minors worked over 3 hours on school days, over eight on non-school days, according to investigators. Minors were found working more than 18 hours in a school week and more than 40 during non-school weeks. They also worked later than they should have been allowed by law.

The McDonald's stores also "allowed 14- and 15-year-old employees to work in a hazardous occupation prohibited for this age group by engaging them in cooking activities involving deep-fat fryers not equipped with devices that automatically lower and raise the baskets into and out of the hot oil," a news release from the Department of Labor said.

In a statement sent to The Courier Journal, NPT Partners said, "The well-being and safety of our restaurant employees that serve our customers each day is among our top priorities. We take these matters very seriously and are committed to adhering to all federal, state, and local youth employment laws moving forward."

"Child labor laws exist to strike a balance between providing meaningful work experience for young people and keeping them safe on the job while not interfering with their educational opportunities," Wage and Hour Division District Director Karen Garnett-Civils said in a statement.

"We encourage all employers – especially those who employ minors – to review their employment obligations and to contact the Wage and Hour Division for compliance

assistance. Employers can avoid violations like those found in this case," added Garnett-Civils.

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The franchise paid \$48,258 in civil penalties for the child labor law violations. Here are the stores that had violations:

- Hikes — 2961 Breckinridge Lane
- Poplar — 3100 Poplar Level Road
- Broadway — 207 W. Broadway
- Dorsey — 9901 Ormsby Station Road
- Dutchman's Store — 998 Breckinridge Lane
- Lakeside — 2209 Taylorsville Road

In addition to the child labor violations, the franchise violated overtime and minimum wage laws, the department said. As a result, it paid out \$20,015 to eight employees.

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